

you are here
the journal of creative geography



Suspensions

Spaces Between Illness and Health

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Suspensions

Letter from the Editors

In 1948, the World Health Organization wrote a definition of health into the preamble of its Constitution. This definition departed from typical notions of health as the absence of disease. Rather, the WHO definition signaled a wider change in thinking in which social, political, cultural and economic factors were increasingly understood to affect one's health. Today, The National Wellness Institute lists 8 dimensions of "well-ness," a term often used to signify the many layers of meanings and practices implicated in people's health. Those dimensions include the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical, cultural, occupational, social and environmental.

As health geographers concerned with the dialogic relationship between society and space, it is telling that space is not on that list. Yet, as geographers have shown, it is possible to examine each of those dimensions - from the spiritual to the intellectual to the occupational - using a lens of space. Not only is it possible, we believe that it is necessary. Unpacking the notion of health without considering space means missing how health is produced through spatial discourses and practices, and how space also mediates our understanding of and how we practice health.

For example, biomedicine, as we know it, could not exist without an institutional infrastructure of hospitals, clinics, insurance companies and university research facilities. Thinking through space in this way makes it possible to ask, what knowledge is lost when practices like home birthing are moved from the home into a clinical setting? Should people who are ill be expected to separate themselves from society, get well and then return to full productivity? How do the ill conduct themselves in workspaces? For that matter, how are they *expected* to conduct themselves? And what about the chronically ill? Where do they belong? At home, the space we associate with recovery? How can someone who is chronically ill remain at home, getting well, while also being a "productive member of society"?

And how does space constitute health? For example, how does access to fresh produce help people maintain their health? Or how do changing economic arrangements make the emergency room not only a space for treating medical emergencies but, for many, the only place to get preventative care?

For those who are not ill, what does it mean to maintain or strive for health? Do things like taking vitamins, biking to work, and eating fresh foods actually make people healthier? Or does the pressure to continuously strive for good health add extra stress to already over-booked lives? Do economies or cultural systems that place responsibility on the individual to maintain good health, put one in a state of suspension?

In all of these examples, space is not a container in which health occurs. It is part and parcel of what it means to be healthy. We draw special attention to this subject in the 2012 edition of *youarehere* by providing a space for people to communicate their very personal experiences of health. For those reasons, the theme for 2012 is "Suspension: Spaces Between Illness and Health."

We have many ideas about what it means to be in suspension: it is possible, for example, to think of suspension as a space itself, an experiential, temporal and liminal space. Using this lens it is possible to ask questions about the short-term impacts of health - or lack thereof - on daily life, about the experience of waiting for a diagnosis, or of being in suspension while experiencing a string of misdiagnosis.

We also understand the experience of suspension to be spatialized. How may one's behavior at home, where illness is permitted, be different than in public, where there is an expectation that one will function "normally." Or, using a wider lens, what is it like to experience soul loss but to have a doctor only willing to prescribe depression pills?

Suspension, too, can alter one's perceptions of space. Illness, accidents, and injuries can render mundane tasks, like walking down the street or navigating steps, exceedingly difficult. Spaces sometimes function as places where people can deal with or end their state of suspension, like therapeutic landscapes such as hot springs and wellness resorts, which come to being through a combination of economic, health, and spatial practices. Hospice, too, provides a unique lens for thinking about the medicalization and spatialization of death and dying. Nursing homes are putatively supporting environments, but is it possible to understand them as spaces for removing people who are no longer "productive" from social spaces?

The very idea of conventional and alternative medicine is spatialized with the conventional often referring to western biomedical practice. Engaging with so-called complementary and alternative treatments is often rooted in other, cultural ways of knowing disease.

But these are the ways we, as medical geographers and as people who have had personal experiences with ill health, understand the many spaces of suspension. In this 2012 edition of *youarehere*, we asked that you explore, and share with us, your perspectives. We thank each and every one of the contributors for opening up the very personal space of health to public view and making it possible to explore as many dimensions of health, and suspension, as possible.

Sincerely,

Melinda Butterworth & Georgia Davis Conover
Editors, *youarehere*:
The Journal of Creative Geography

Editor's Note:

Each editor was given the privilege of selecting one submission for inclusion in this year's journal. These selections are not meant to indicate the best submissions, or to prioritize some over others. Rather these selections were chosen because they connect with the topic, and with geography, in some way that particularly resonates with the editors.

Georgia's note:

Every so often, something occurs to jolt you out of the mundane-ness of every day life, making you suddenly and acutely aware of your physical surroundings and perhaps—rarer so—making visible some hidden cultural assumptions about values, norms, and difference. Those precious moments, brought about, for example, by the unexpected site of a homeless man reading Melville in the heat of a laundry vent, have the potential to bring into relief the circumstances of one's own life, and how precious and fleeting good health, social standing or well-being can be (Old Faithful).

---Georgia Davis Conover

Mindy's note:

Mary Christine Delea's piece Arthritis tells us of a journey with illness as a companion. In it, we become acquainted with the struggle of nights lacking sleep and filled with pain, questions of biotechnology and quality of life, the sometimes-unbridgeable spaces between experiential and biomedical knowledges, and the sharp juxtaposition between dreams and waking. Arthritis opens us up to exploring these spaces, navigated through sickness, vitality, disability, and joy, and serves to remind us that health and illness can be transient states, and always riddled with suspension.

---Mindy Butterworth

Jesse's note:

Tempo Rubato whispered to me during its first read and continued speaking more loudly each time it was re-read. A musician's death; a diagnosis; a questioning; space and time within the genetic code – we are reminded of the instability, not just of reality, but of our own perception. As the notes on each sheet of Chopin's sonatas are realized differently by each person sitting down to play on countless piano keys around the world, so too must we interpret the world, our bodies, and our selves within each new breath/struggle.

---Jesse Quinn

Definitions of Health:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

---Constitution of the United Nations World Health Organization (1947)

Health is not a fixed entity. It varies for every individual, depending on their circumstances. Health is defined not by the doctor, but by the person, according to his or her functional needs.

--- *The Lancet*. Vol. 373 Issue 9666, p781. (2009)

Health disparities negatively affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater social or economic obstacles to health. These obstacles stem from characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion such as race or ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, mental health, sexual orientation, or geographic location.

---Centers for Disease Control Definitions (2011)

Suspensions: Spaces Between Illness and Health

---*youarehere: the journal of creative geography* (2012)

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Institutionalized Spaces:

Institution: An established law, custom, usage, practice, organization, or other element in the political or social life of a people; a regulative principle or convention subservient to the needs of an organized community or the general ends of civilization.*

Matters of Life and Death

Cliff Henderson

When, after the examination,
my doctor crossed his legs,
preparing to consult,
I noticed that his shoes
were very good.

I had never seen such shoes
and held my thoughts
lest I betray my lack of knowledge
of such worldly matters.

Still, I knew they were the very best,
and could not help but be distracted
as he offered his opinion
on the seriousness of my condition.

I would describe them to you
but that would be unfair
to you and to the shoes
as it would limit your imagination
in perceiving just how beautiful
such shoes could be.

I knew they were refined
and could not help but be distracted
as he offered his opinion
on my condition.



Mother is Ill
Eleanor Bennett

Arthritis

Mary Christine Delea

A made-up disease, this pain in my knee,
the sleepless nights must be all in my head
because no body could invent
this tragedy of bones and joints.
The doctor says I can maintain this thing,

tells me she knows everything
about arthritis, but I know better:
there is nothing to know.
I can beat it if it doesn't exist,
if there is nothing but stress
waking me every night.
The knees are just symptoms.

Doctor, no one knows everything.
Maybe we have gone too far.
Maybe we should be content to die
younger, free of pain.

Or perhaps we need to go further:
push science to create more plastic
for our bodies, metal springs
for sale in the drug store
where canes and walkers
used to take up space.

I only know that when I do sleep
enough to dream, I don't even bother
with flying. Walking's enough.

The Black Camel

David Sullivan

Malak al-Maut (Azrael),
the Angel of Death

Lance Corporal
Aaron Austin

Republican Guard Colonel
Mohammed Hameo

*Death is the Black Camel that kneels before every door.
-Arabic saying*

*No one has been here
before you, no one will come
after you're gone.*

I carry your pic
inside my helmet. You're my
lucky ace of spades,

Tiffany. Come spring
I aim to be home and slip
that rock on your hand.

Barracks were a wreck.
Men were looting everything:
guns, chairs, even cots.

I threatened to shoot.
One locked eyes with me and grinned,
Why do such a thing?

Metal coffee cans
are stuffed with bolts, nails, even
Iraqi coins cut
into star-shaped chunks.

Some get detonated by

remote-controlled cars.

The mass of flies lifts,
resettles as I scoot past
the dead body's bloat.

Don't cling to one form;

water continues to flow

after the pot breaks.

Americans tore
the small *Qu'ran* from my wife's
neck, made me burn it.

Grilled the Twinkies you sent.
They laughed, but New Mexico
and you were right here.

I don't ask for much:
my teashop, some customers,
our good wives at home.

My son wanted more.
Worked for Americans, told them
what Iraqis said.

We asked a farmer,
face darkened by his raised spade,
if he'd seen any

foreign fighters. Ali,
our Iraqi terp, laughed, then
translated: *Yes, you.*

Ali wore a mask,
like a criminal, but the
Mujahid still knew.

Blood, frogs, lice, wild beasts.

MurRAIN, boils, thunder and hail.

Locusts and darkness.

The RPG slammed
into the Humvee's windshield
but didn't explode.

Derrick took the wheel
'cuz I got jittered, big old
bomb point in his face.

The slaughter of firstborns.

Glass, mingled with fire, will fall,

break angels' harp strings.

Didn't feel a thing,
just a pinging in my ears.
I looked-and Derrick

and where he'd been was
just gone. Scarved men were dragging
Ali through glass shards.

I made them take me
to where it happened. Frenzy
of soldiers and swears.

The terp's old man stood
still as a deer while soldiers

humped, picking up pieces.

Blood filled a tire track.
Filmed over with dust. Dimpled
in a tear of wind.

The IED hit
while I held his cigarette.
Where's God, Tiffany?

Blood dried on my lip,
but it wasn't mine. Didn't
wash it off for days.

The morgue's waiting room
monitors scrolled through faces
of the dead: May, June . . .

Swore I saw my son,
but when they showed me, I cried
for a stranger boy.

If it does not hurt

nothing will grow. Pierce your tongue.

Spot ground with blood. Pray.

Blood on the letter
ripped apart in Derrick's gear:
Dear Sis, I never . . .

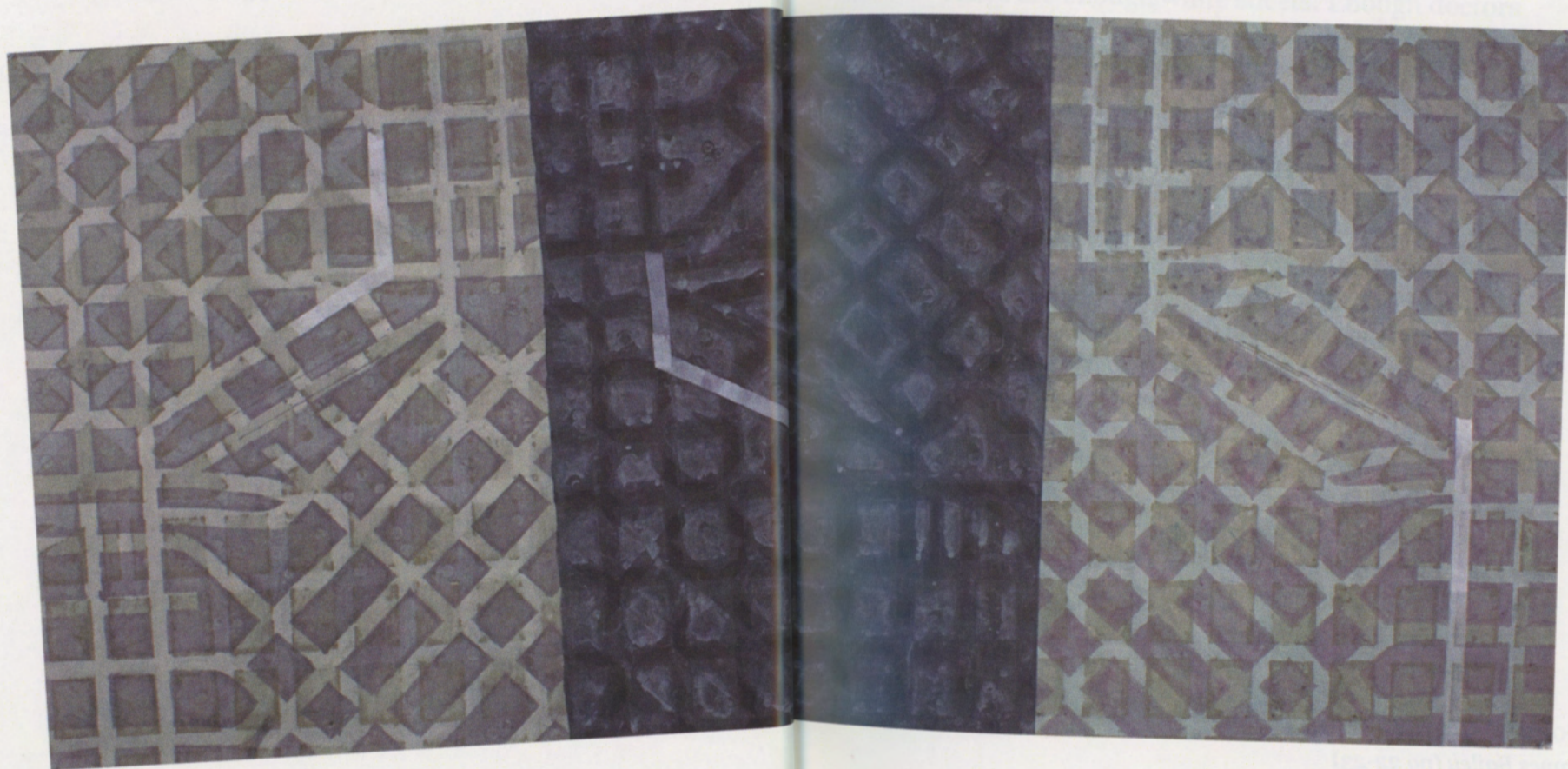
I still hope to find
his body. Bury it. Black
Camel kneels before

every door, but why
take our eldest so soon? Love
has no taste in war.

These sandals were made

only for you, but now I

place them in the fire.



Going To Work
James Bailey (pg 22-23)

The map's agenda, its truthfulness may be suspect, and wholly dependent on the interpretation, manipulation and extrapolation of the mapmaker.

Bald

H. Edgar Hix

All the bald-headed ladies in bald rooms
eating poison in hopes of surviving.
The smell of cleanliness is everywhere.
There are enough white sheets. Enough doctors
passing through, talking to those passing on.
Never enough relatives and friends.
Plenty of nurses, though, to clean things up,
open windows, close windows, toss flowers.
Everyone fears they'll catch the next bouquet.
Everyone says they've conquered fear,
conquered that emptiness only life can fill.
No one even whispers about the whispering
in the hall, in the chapel, in the brown
doctor's offices with shelves of books and
pretty pictures. She has her son's picture
on the tray beside the breakfast she won't eat.
She has a wallet with grandchildren, her cats;
everyone she doesn't want to have see her this way.
She looks at the door longingly, not wanting
to see their eyes but needing their faces.
Needing their curls and fresh breath to remind her
not everyone is Socrates. Not everyone needs to know
how to take the hemlock, the vinegar mixed with gall;
how to click glasses with bald death while smiling.

Clothes Call

Lynn Hoffman

Through the hospital halls, jaws slack, eyes straight ahead
march the lock-legged legions of the sick in clothes they wore
when they were well. costumed each as a former self.
All wrapped up in yesterday sinking through today
with collar buttons on chests and pleated waists
and sleeves rolled up to where their hands end.

On the street outside, the man with two kids shows off
his teenage jacket, boyhood pants.
the lady who left her husband last year does her hair
like it was on her wedding day.
the off-duty cop flashes chains as he sports
for stuff and something on the street.
the priest goes by in his jogging suit
point guard for the gospel according to.
the bhikku wraps his saffron robe
in winter tweed and suffers not a whit.

And then the bell strikes one, two, three
and everyone strips off their past
and stares blinking in the fierce light of now
and someone-the cop? the lady?
starts to giggle and the bhikku smiles
and then the hospital echoes like a horn filled up
with its own music as Extra Large hits the floor
and Medium, naked, begins to laugh.

Clothes Cell Evan Hoffman

Through the hospital halls, jaws slack, eyes straight ahead
march the lock-kyed legions of the sick in clothes they wore
when they were well, costumed each as a former self.
All wrapped up in yesterday sinking through today
with collar buttons on chests and pleated waists
and sleeves rolled up to where their hands end.

On the street outside, the man with two kids shoes off
his teenage jacket, boyhood pants,
the lady who left her husband last year does her hair
like it was on her wedding day,
the off-duty cop flashes chains as he sports
for stuff and something on the street,
the priest goes by in his jogging suit,
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the bikku wraps his saffron robe
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And then the bell strikes one, two, three
and everyone strips off their past
and stares blinking in the nerve light of now
and someone—the cop? the lady?
starts to giggle and the bikku smiles
and then the hospital echoes like a horn filled up
with its own music as Extra Large hits the floor
and Medium, naked, begins to laugh.

Spaces of Conflict:

Conflict: Of interests, opinions, statements, feelings, etc.:
To come into collision, to clash; to be at variance, be in-
compatible.

Still 146 After the Apocalypse
Adrian Paul

Confession

Molly Sutton Kiefer

The longer the stars winch a trail,
the more sleeplessness feels drunken.

I made the mistake of confessing:

I used to stutter along my wrists in the shower,
plasters casting about, and the night I came home,
drunk on vodka-and-orange-juice,

stared at the bottle of aspirin,
that wave of body in the wind, that lack
of kitchen breeze. I wanted him to know

because I wanted him to know what I feel now—
that push in vulnerability, the plushness of the fear,
that sinking. The baby book says

the awareness of emotions have been peeled back,
that the emotions themselves are not enhanced.

I feel klieg lights within.



Still Life After the Apocalypse
Adrienne Lobl

Born on the 4th of July, In Honduras

David Sullivan

—for Army Sergeant Giann Joya-Mendoza

He kissed the metal
of his Saint Christopher, laid
it in the Bible

where Moses opens
a way en el Mar Rojo.
He'd just turned sixteen,

shoved rubber-banded
bills into his jean's pocket,
stripped down and stuffed them

in a plastic bag
with plaid shirts, folded blade, shoes,
and three balls of socks.

The Rio Bravo's bruised
skin swallowed his naked form,
air-buoyed plastic

floated on the rope
he'd tethered to his waist. Coarse
weave gouged a red scar.

He swam hard, not going
back. The sack bobbed up downstream
until he hauled it in.

*

He remembered that boy
he'd been, as he dove into
the swimming pool where

Saddam's portrait grinned,
rippling chipped mosaic.
He was American

now, proud to join up,
but they razed his cracked Spanglish,
joshed him for looking up

Arabic, not porn.
He'd worked the odd jobs and steered
clear of chicha's sting

until a green card
sang in his pocket. Piecemeal,
brought his family

over, a puzzle
that never quite fit again
into the barrio

Houston tossed at them.
Some yanks coveted Saddam's
palatial trappings

but he wanted streets
where tajadas salt-fried chips
rode stacked paper plates,

where you kissed a hand
before dancing a punta
for a friend who'd died.

In his last letter:
If I don't make it home, dance
on my happy grave.

Bangles and Coconuts

Kawika Guillermo

In Goa I am kept up all night at a bar by a martial arts teacher high on LSD, tearing apart little bits of napkins onto his leg. I see reckless Israelis running into the hills, crazed out on ecstasy, tripping on every stump, never realizing how bruised and bleeding their bodies have become. After I tell a Scottish man to be careful of the coconuts, that if one hits him on its way down there will be nothing but a convulsing carcass, he starts whacking at every palm tree he finds.

The women selling bangles on the beach join me for a chai; one tells me her husband has a daily ritual of going out and playing with his friends, leaving her to work. The girls suddenly quiet down when an Indian man comes to survey them. He shouts something and almost all of them run away. I wonder if they are just trying to sell me bangles. Later, as we bargain for a price, she uses her troubling anecdotes to close: If you buy at this price, my husband get angry, beat me beat me!

I think they are just trying to sell me their bangles.

On Anjuna Beach, the Kathans from the south of Hampi come to Goa to sell the handmade trinkets and bangles molded by their families in the villages. These former adivasis have become over-pressuring tourist touts, selling any kind of drug one can imagine, providing the hippies and backpackers with infinite distraction.

The touts here speak German, English, Hebrew, Hindi, Tamil, French, Spanish and Portuguese. But they mostly know the bad words picked up from foul mouthed backpackers. What would be inappropriate in any other country has become modern parlance for the Goan locals. They shout curses at tourists just to make conversation: shize, panpcha, baka na, merde, madar chod.

Goa collects the profanity of the traveler, hides it in sand, lets the ocean waves carry it into a bleak and forgettable ocean. I walk behind Avisha on that pristine beach, my

feet sinking into the sand. Small rocks riddle the black beach, coating the shore. My foot steps in her footprints. I smoke a cigarette and so does she. She passes the herd of Indian women with their bags and says Apkiya hay and I repeat the very same words with the same fascinated smile.

A cell phone rings the Windows OS tune. I stare at the ripening coconuts at the top of a palm tree. The Indian running a cheap shop of cashew alcohol was the first of many to tell me never to stand beneath the palm trees on a windy day, that when the coconuts fall there is rarely a head left to recognize. I stand below these trees in doubt, wondering if the local man's warnings were just another way to build rapport, faking a shared interest in my own life.

I tell Avisha to kick the tree, and she does, repeating the same spurious warning that the Indian had given me. We smoke before and after sex, always hash mixed with tobacco, to set our minds back to some unconscious exhale. I welcome her habit of smoking hash before we do it, to phase-shift before tossing about between the sheets. I do not inhale a single hit.

Her body is short but not squat, thin but not skinny. She looks Hindi but claims she has no "Indian blood," and I dare not press her on this claim. Her long frizzed hair is not my type, and her erected nose makes her face seem devilish. But when I first fed her at the fish market I saw none of these things, only the brown crease of her backside. Since Indian women never dress so modern outside Mumbai, she was surely one of those North Londoner girls, raised in one of those unsettling Indian-English homes, returning now with some volitional sense of duty, curiosity, and debt, hiring tour buses and taxis to introduce her to their own culture. Yet she speaks so unlike these flimsies: with vast eyes, a cigarette clutched between her teeth, sending stern glares of reproach to the Indian men cajoling her in Konkani. She gossips with a brightly clad Indian woman who holds her hand, as if it doesn't matter that she isn't really one of them.

The first time that I mention my ex-girlfriend she

knows what I seek—that rapturous drama of romance and betrayal that makes lovemaking so much fresher. I had purpose, a hippie who knocks off in Goa as if it were a puritanical duty. Perhaps that is why she smokes hash before sex, and always sticks her hand towards me to offer a hit, then refuses to let me stop until I no longer hold that timorous, sorrowful look of self-disgust that she must have seen every night before I so breezily committed one iniquitous act of betrayal after another. Avisha never asks.

In the morning I see her in the field outside our small motel, staring at a dead cow. The animal seems at peace, its head broken in by a stray coconut. Her fingers make a cone to light a cigarette among the harsh ocean wind. Beside the animal, a young female shop owner paints her nails. We go to the unadorned hotel room, where she calls Goa quits in the same way she might cold-turkey a tobacco habit.

Situated Moments

Moment: A very short period or extent of time, esp. one too brief for its duration to be significant.

knows what I seek—that rapturous drama of romance and betrayal that makes love-making so much fresher. I had purpose, a hippie who knocks off in Goa as if it were a puritanical duty. Perhaps that is why she smokes hash before sex, and always strikes her hand towards me to offer a hit, then refuses to let me stop until I no longer hold that timorous, sorrowful look of self-dignity that she must have seen every night before I so brazenly committed one iniquitous act of betrayal after another. Aricha never asks.

In the morning I see her in the field outside our small motel, staring at a dead cow. The animal seems at peace, its head broken in by a stray coconut. Her fingers make a cone to light a cigarette among the harsh ocean wind. Beside the animal, a young female shop owner paints her nails. We go to the unadorned hotel room, where she calls Goa quits in the same way she might cold-turkey a tobacco habit.

The Formerly Stray Cats of Raja Fardou Street

David Porter

Cats have no ghosts.

They are ghosts themselves—

Situated Moments:

their silent passage,

as if they travelled through ether
to arrive at the front of our building.

We never see them age.

Moment: A very short period or extent of time, esp.
one too brief for its duration to be significant.

their open mouths crashed
against the hot macarons.

More often they are poisoned,
a sick pursuit,

of which they live unaware.

We feed them canned food,

pour milk into their plastic bowls,
evoke their purring with loving caresses,
call them by the silly names we gave them
as they stare against our calves.
But our appellations do not matter.

They drop to the cool pavement
at our front door,

at home and without language
the way we used to nod off
on the L, uptown from 18th,
on our way home from
Union Square to the Upper West Side.

The Formerly Stray Cats of Riga Feraiou Street

David Porter

Cats have no ghosts.
They are ghosts themselves –
deathless.
how else to explain
their silent passage,
as if they travelled through ether
to arrive at the front of our building.

We never see them age.
Dead, perhaps,
along the baking roads
that lead away from Strovolos,
their open mouths crushed
against the hot macadam.
More often they are poisoned,
a sick pursuit
of which they live unawares.

We feed them canned food,
pour milk into their plastic bowls,
evoke their purring with loving caresses,
call them by the silly names we gave them
as they slalom against our calves.
But our appellations do not matter.

They drop to the cool pavement
at our front door,
at home and without language
the way we used to nod off
on the 1, uptown from 18th,
on our way home from
Union Square to the Upper West Side.

Tracing Attrition

Eleanor Paynter

The Space That Held Him

Disease curled like his cane
still propped in the corner,
creaked the linoleum
path of his chair. This part

I knew, the rooms
he leaned into –

The house recovered easy
from his falls. In the aftermath,
bathtub handle,
front porch ramp –

The Microscope

In a coronal section of the brain, malfunctions
appear as the eyes of a mask.

They make a dark pair. In my father's slice,
the substantia nigra, black substance, hid
misfired shots. Hard to see
how it wrung itself dry of dopamine.

Another mask, his face
began its slow freeze. As the eyes
in his brain zapped commands down his spine,
the eyes of expression locked in place.

The mask couldn't speak
from the glazed face – but the blare inside,
zizzing and zatting, electric tics, body
tricked into river, or ice –

The Hum of Chronic

Sometimes after midnight he turned up
the Gladys Knight or Ralph Sutton and hammered
relentless. It was a way of being

alone. Within the human brain,
100 billion neurons, up to 10,000 connections each.
A lot goes unnoticed.

It can happen that a person
dependent on everyone else
stops asking for rides.

He slipped into himself
and spilled out. What starts on this edge –
first wheel track pressed into wheat field,

a book left open on the table – in the brief moment
between clamor and white, in the space
where a wavelength passed –

These are versions
of what happened to my father,
who lived somewhere between them.

He stiffened in the shoulders but couldn't stop moving
his hands. When the misfires
threatened memory, he wrote letters.

When they trickled down his limbs,
he built a door

My Grandfather, Stricken With Alzheimer's, On One Of His

Better Days

Steve Shilling

While we were watching
a football game, my grandfather said,
"Steve, what do you do?"
In the second I paused, I thought
about how I always wanted to
graduate from Purdue and
be a Civil Engineer, just like him.
I looked him in the eye and smiled.
"I'm going to be an English teacher."

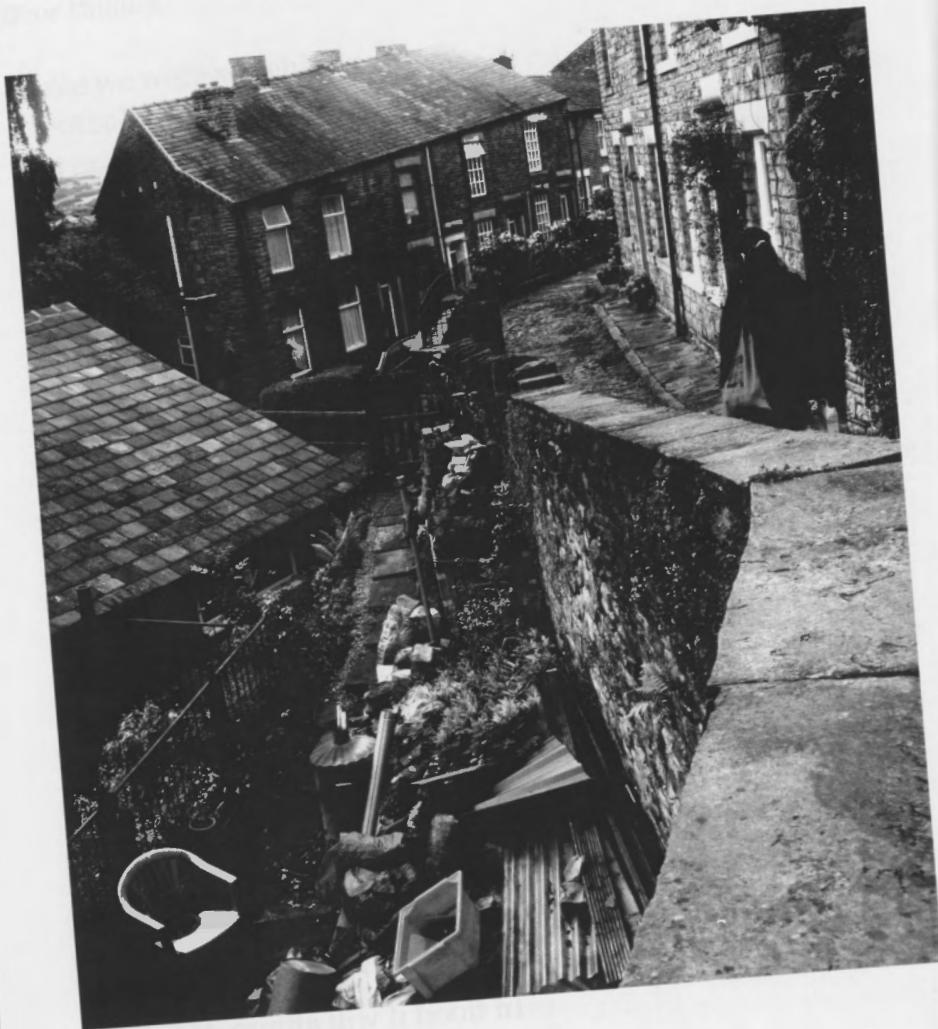
"That's good," he said.

River in Flood

Emily Strauss

One day this stream will dry
until only a few muddy patches
reveal where it once poured
across smooth boulders, digging
a new channel in its rush downhill,
once slowed this course will meander
silently under sage in deep pools
no longer lapping the red cliffs.

In flood it will abjure its former
ways, leaving behind small ponds
with drying reeds and shriveled leaves
as I will die with the flowers in the brown
fall, the river far away among new willows,
cottonwoods and globe mallows
in another year of snows.



Away
Eleanor Bennett

What I Wanted to Say

Jennifer Clark

When you returned my Sunday call
left with your answering service and I told you
her pulse was erratic, blood pressure fluctuating wildly and
reminded you of her recent diagnosis of afibrillation

what I wanted to say was
her heart can not hold another. I have only known
my mother's heart to be big enough to hold the sky.
To think of it as only one fluttery muscle in this vast world
frightens me.

When you asked of other symptoms and I told you she was
dizzy, I should have told you that our world is spinning, that
my sister has driven across town and dragged into my par-
ent's perfectly clean home a vacuum cleaner, mop and host
of cleaning supplies because

she wants to do something,
it is the only way she knows to be of some assistance
as she is a comet burning, streaking across the living room
with her swiffer, saying *I just love this swiffer,*
especially with the long handle attachment, do you have
one? I don't know how I ever managed to dust before
this invention and I couldn't find the long handle of mine
so I'm so glad I could find yours. Mom, you don't mind do
you?

My mother puts one hand to her head, the other hand
waves away this noise some child.

When did my mother's hands grow old?

I wanted to mention that between beats my mother worries
that her husband isn't going to have a proper dinner. When
she creaks out *oh, honey, I wanted to fix you that beautiful*
roast you bought the other day, my sister stops with the
swiffering and says *I'll fix the roast* and flies into the kitchen

and we all—my mother, father, sister and me—breathe a sigh of relief that she could now safely orbit a chunk of meat.

When you asked about her dosage and I told you it was 25 mgs of Rhythmol, what I wanted to say was my father seems suddenly old and helpless, his hands shaking as he tries to comfort his wife with pillows and food and pills, all which she is refusing. She is swatting us away like gnats but we can't help but hover near her.

We are drawn to her. She is our light.

Because it happened after we got off the phone, I couldn't report this to you but my sister, in the middle of preparing the roast, stopped and demanded of my mother—*who did you call first?*

At the same time my sister said—*I live closer, you should have called me, why didn't you call me?*—my mother sighed: *your sister called me.*

This immediately appeased my sister who gravitated back to seasoning the roast.

When you paused I heard myself fill the silence, saying, she just isn't herself. What I was trying to get across is that she is the type of woman who likes to be in control, who takes pride in not asking anything of others. Her phone rings steadily throughout the day with friends and acquaintances calling to obtain her advice or get her take on their ailments. So when she called and said *can you come over* I said *sure* and hung up the phone,

leaving the mouth of the dryer opened wide in amazement, clothes tumbling over themselves, spilling onto the floor and ran out the door and found her in the shower unable to step out.

I towed her off like she did for me when I was little. I helped her dress and watched her watching me as if somehow I could make her better. So you've got to make her all better please.

Fix her fix her fix her.

Then my sister can stop dusting,
my father can stop wringing his hands
and I can be her daughter again.

When we hung up, I don't think you heard me at all.

and we all—my mother, father, sister and me—breathed a sigh
of relief that she could now safely add a chunk of meat

When you asked about her dosage and I told you it was 25 mg of
Rhythol, what I wanted to say was my father seems suddenly old
and helpless, his hands shaking as he tries to comfort her with
pillows and food and pills all which she keeps pushing away. She is sweating out
away like girls but we can't help but hover near her.

We are drawn to her. She is our light.

Because it happened after we got off the plane, I couldn't report this
to you but my sister, in the middle of preparing the road, stopped and
demanded of my mother who did you tell her?

At the same time my sister said—I know you should have told me
my mother said my sister said—I know you should have told me

This immediately upset my sister who
granted back to searching the road.

When you passed I heard myself all the while, saying, she just didn't
bark. What I was trying to get across is that she is the type of woman
who likes to be in control, who takes pride in not letting anything
of others. Her phone rings slowly throughout the day with friends
and acquaintances calling to check on her advice or get her take on their
advice. So when she called and said that you were out of your mind
and hung up the phone.

As the mouth of our drama opened wide in amazement, my
clothes tumbling over themselves, pulling onto the floor that you sat
the door and knew in the shower unable to step out.
I looked her in the eye and said to me when I was little. She was two
years old and watched her watch her me as if somehow I could make her
better. So you've got to make her all better please.

Fix her for her for her.

Then my sister ran away crying,
my father ran away wailing his hands
and I can be her daughter again.

When we hang up, I don't think you heard me at all.

Uninterred

David Iasevoli

I camped beneath
a reliquary,
a gulley or perhaps
an arroyo

that rilled down
scabbed manzanita
and pike-stemmed
miniature aster.

The flaked soil,
nearly sand, showed
evidence of slaughter
and feast:

plate of hare crania,
rodent teeth,
the ribs of nearly-flightless birds,
a section of lizard spine.

All bones panned
not by desert sun
but by poisonous
moonlight, gleam and ache.

Internalized Spaces:

Internal: Pertaining to the inner nature or relations of anything, as distinguished from its relations to things external to itself; belonging to the thing or subject in itself; intrinsic.

The Molting Season

Jennifer Clark

Time has a way of melding
recurring moments into one, like
that Saturday my father gathered me up
with books and papers and took me

to work with him, let me wander his lab,
past countertops unruffled by rows
of sinks sunk into sterile bellies.
Swan-necked faucets rose haughtily

over microscopes and beakers, snubbing
the giant king crab that adorned the wall.
Beneath suspended claws, aquariums bubbled
a tarantula tank hummed, then came

the brutal beauty of butterflies pursued,
a mélange of delicate wings splayed
under glass as a shiny chorus of pins sang
to no one in particular or to flocks

of students who took note of his discourse,
caught in their papery nets words like
exoskeleton, thorax, and
ecdysis.

Two generations of cicadas later
it's disconcerting he could tell no one—
not his wife who found him, paramedics
who arrived on the scene, the E.R. doctors

who stitched him up, or his grown children
who kept asking—how it came to be
he opened himself up
upon the hardness of the bathroom floor.

He has grown
too big for this world, has shrugged off
his inner suit, shed rusted wings and
burrowed himself into fine places.

Armed with only a rag, I am
unable to pin down,
just out of reach, my father
tumbling away from me.

The Injury Francine Rubin

The snap sensed by the body

Concentric cracks circling
a pane of glass

The body separated
from itself seeking
itself

Industriousness of cells:
spinning new cells

The afterimage shape of the gash

Muscles re-stitching
themselves

Shards re-
fusing

Ghazal for John

Jesse Wallis

It was his fate to come out in the late '70s, come out from Michigan,
Following some hometown boys to Phoenix, where they had gone

To be reborn. Leaving his short-lived marriage and a newborn son,
Things he wished could be undone, but that was how life had gone.

In his mid-twenties, he found himself learning a new way to find love.
He learned through the dark, from strangers, until the guilt was gone.

He worked hard at his new job, bought a condo on an artificial lake.
Thought less of Detroit and his old life, or where the time had gone.

Just after the new year, his new friends started to sicken, one by one,
Then die. No one knew at first why, but where they'd gone, he'd gone.

So alone, he made the trip back to Michigan, to wait his turn at home.
Ten years he waited for the test and most, most of his fear to be gone.

It was decades later, again in the desert, when I met my friend John.
He didn't talk too much about those times and all that had gone on.

But every now and then, he'd show me something he'd been given,
Or remember how a song or joke he'd heard in the clubs had gone.

He'd smile and break out laughing, "That year, we had so much fun!
It didn't matter if it was Monday, we'd dance until the night was gone."

Then after the long laughter, the silence and the tears would come.
"Imagine, Jesse, all the friends of your youth—all of them—gone."

Ghazal poetic structure: The first couplet is composed of a rhyme, followed by a refrain. In the couplets that follow, it is the second line that repeats the refrain, and rhymes with both lines from the first couplet. The final couplet is equivalent to the poet's signature. It typically makes reference to the author, often using the author's name, or some derivation of the name's meaning.

---poets.org

2' 45"

Grace Andreacchi

What you must do
do quickly

the smile stillborn
the child killed in the womb
the last kiss
let it be done quickly

I would lay down my
life for you
I would lie down
and die for you
let it be quickly

Footsteps

Linda Lyons

It's 6 a.m. and I've filled up the water dish, coaxed the dogs out for a pee and donned the clothing I carefully laid out the night before. "Wear heavy long pants," they said. "Make sure to have long sleeves. Dress in layers. Hiking boots are essential." I check my fanny pack for the necessities – sunscreen, sunglasses, bug repellent. I grab two chilled water bottles from the fridge and my Tilley hat and tiptoe out to the garage.

The dogs barely lift an eyebrow. Blade is curled up on the bed, on my pillow, next to my sleeping husband. The dog takes up more room in our bed than I do with his long greyhound legs stretched out to their fullest, his feet pushed into my husband's back. When Blade dreams, he sets off a tattoo of running that vibrates through the covers and stimulates my husband's kidneys. The poor man hasn't had a full night's sleep since we adopted the big boy 7 years ago. Jackson, the newest member of the family, blends into the dusk with his brown brindle coat. He stretches full length across the doorway on the cool tile and forces me to climb over top. His trust is absolute. I think I see an ear twitch, but that could just be a trick of light.

I am always amazed that Tucson has relatively little traffic early in the morning. Speedway is almost a straight shot. Time one light right and it's clear sailing. My mouth waters as I float by Beyond Bread and one by one, my fellow travelers veer off into Burger King, Jack-in-the-Box, McDonalds. I am not tempted - I don't want to be late.

The sun is already above the Rincons, still weak, but building. I know I'll roast in the desert. The sweat will pour down my brow stinging my eyes and the wool socks in my boots will be a sodden mess when I get home.

The church parking lot is empty. "Be there early," they said. I sit with the windows down, feeling the sun on my face, the air with a faint reminder of dawn chill. Slowly they ar-

rive - quiet men with outdoor skin: men in cowboy boots and Stetsons, well-worn jeans and bandanas. I watch as they fill up bright blue water tanks, hitch trailers to pick-ups, count out jugs and supplies. I'm so busy watching I don't notice the cars and trucks straggling in, one by one. Suddenly, it's full daylight and people are milling on the asphalt, greeting and introducing, checking maps, counting heads. I lock up and join them.

"Is the church open?" I ask. I want to take a pee. I don't want to embarrass myself in the middle of nowhere with these strangers. Somebody gives me a key and I scurry across the tarmac. I'm not the only one, just the first in a dude ranch parade. My Tilley hat marks me as a newcomer. In Europe or Africa or Asia, I would inevitably be accosted by a smile and a finger pointing at the hat and inquiring "Tilley?", but in the desert it marks me as a newcomer, not a seasoned traveler but an interloper, a rube.

Ricardo and Diana and I climb in the back of an SUV. Steve drives and Jody Lee rides shotgun. Like a Wild West wagon train, we pull out in a convoy and head to nowhere - ten minutes of highway and an hour of washboard dirt. I'm glad I had that last bathroom break. Diana dozes, her head bouncing off the window. Ricardo is ill. He coughs and oozes and sweats. I try not to jostle into either of them and sit ramrod straight. My water bottles roll on either side of the hump in the floor. I can't remember the last time I sat in the back seat. I'd rather be in the front, in some sort of control.

I have a choice. I can take the rougher trail to the north or head south from the line of parked vehicles already baking in the sun. I don't see any trail, north or south, just desert. This place is so Godforsaken I don't even hear birds. I grab my garbage picker and plastic bag and head south. The rule is you must be able to see your hands and feet at all times. If your foot is obscured by a rock or a chunk of mesquite, it's probably not alone. There are scorpions and

snakes. A shady spot is not a friendly spot. Move on. Walk and watch where you walk.

Down a crumbling wash, up the opposite bank and around a thicket of cholla. We fan out, eyes on the ground - and on our feet. Some clump together in conversational groups, others stride bravely out of sight, intent on their mission. There is no path to follow, so I make my way around rocks and plants, keeping my guide in sight at all times.

I spy my first find almost immediately. It's an empty water jug tossed under a mesquite. I circle around making lots of rustling noises and pride myself on clamping my garbage picker claws on the second try. The jug disintegrates as I raise it from the dust. The sun dries them out so quickly they cannot be reused.

The time I spend grabbing the jug separates me from the group. The stragglers are already off in the distance disappearing down an unseen slope. I hurry to catch up. I could find my way to the trucks from here, but I won't go back now. I want to see what they see, go where they go.

Some primeval force has sliced the desert in half. I slide down a rocky bank into a new world. There is little that is green. The earth is not the hard-packed caliche, orange and brown. Here I walk on yellow sand crystals, among stunted trees with few leaves. The desert brooms are almost white. The prickly pears and cholla belong in a grotesque bonsai garden. The paddles are shriveled and the spines curl out, beckoning, menacing. The rains that reshaped the road have not passed through here. It is sere and austere. The only spots of color are the hats and shirts weaving in and out between me and the dull brown hills.

I walk along the edge of the bank seeing gnarled roots exposed through colored layers of earth. The cut edge is a rainbow in browns and reds, geological formations clearly delineated. Tenacious desert plants struggle to maintain a

hold on the richer, higher layers. A pair of jeans, inside out, has been tossed down the edge of an arroyo. Monsoon season is not over so the jeans are recent. I need both arms to clamp on the jeans and shake them to dislodge any scorpions that may have taken up tenancy. I stuff them into my garbage sack and turn to the desert. Further from the bank lies a T-shirt. The clothes belonged to a very small man or a boy. They have Mexican labels. I hope someone paid extra money for American clothes. I hope whoever they belonged to was not so exhausted that he could no longer carry a change of clothing. The Coyotes have very strict rules. No Mexican clothing after so many miles from the border. For extra pesos, American label clothing is supplied.

I make sure not to lose sight of the rest of my group. They have done this many times. They know the way back to the vehicles. Already I would be lost. There are no landmarks: no telephone poles, tall trees, rooftops. I am in the middle of nowhere. The overpowering beauty is raw and primitive and frightening. I feel eyes boring into me, burning hotter than the sun.

I pick up an empty blister pack, the kind that over the counter medicines come in. I see a glint a few feet away and find another. Already the plastic has deteriorated but the tin foil stays intact in my clamps.

Someone shouts and raises an arm and I hurry as fast as I can while watching my feet take every step. It's a wallet. We need to radio to the trucks. Someone with a GPS will come and plot the position. If inquiries come to the Tucson police, they will be able to tell anxious relatives he made it this far.

The sun is almost directly overhead. I take off my long sleeve shirt and tie it around my waist. My water is already

tepid but I down half a bottle in one giant swig and pour some over my hat. I feel guilty using this precious liquid to make me comfortable. Right now, someone hiding in the desert as we pick up his belongings could be swallowing dust, watching the crazy lady water her hat.

I hear another cry and make my way around stunted mesquite and low-lying thickets of cholla. They told us not to be afraid if we find someone. It will be someone who has given up, been left behind, who wants to be found. We can offer water, basic first aid if needed, but we must call Border Patrol. We will be liable for criminal prosecution if we help in any other way.

Lying in the sun is a baby bottle. It has Minnie Mouse in a pink dress on the side. There is a little water in the bottom. The plastic is still strong. No one wants to say the obvious. We all look around the desert, straining our eyes. We see no one, nothing, but the hairs on the back of my neck rise. My guide picks up the bottle and puts it in her pack. I wonder if while I was fretting about using a flush toilet, a baby out here no longer needed her bottle.

We fan out once more, looking more diligently for footprints, garbage, anything. We know they were here. I am still shaken by the bottle and now there is a cry from far off. The experienced explorers who wandered off on their own rejoin the group carrying a baby stroller found tucked under a desert broom by someone who couldn't carry it anymore. I wonder if the baby died. I don't know. I don't want to know. The adventure of the day has been replaced by a sick knot in my gut.

My guide signals that it is time to return to the trucks. The heat of the day is almost upon us. We make our way

back to the cut and slowly climb the side. At the top, I stand and look once more at the plain and the distant hills. The sun has shifted and is beginning to curve to the west. I cannot see them, but I know they can see me.

Someone else has found a blisterpack. We find another and another – seven in all. Back at the truck I ask. The Coyotes make them take amphetamines to keep up the pace in the night. If they refuse, they are left behind. It's what they pay the money for. They take the pills. They have no choice. Already they have walked six days and nights to make it this far.

My hat is a limp wad at my feet. Bouncing out of the desert, Steve and Jody Lee and Diana and Ricardo are animated. They talk about the day, what they found, what they saw. I sit ramrod straight, jolting from side to side, not wanting to touch either Diana or Ricardo: not wanting to engage with these people who are now my friends. I feel the eyes from the cracks in the desert follow me out to the road.

Fourteen plastic garbage bags sit in the pick-up we follow. We have found backpacks and jackets, candy wrappers and chewing gum boxes. Aluminum cans and water bottle caps dance like popcorn kernels in hot oil in the bed of the truck. Someone has sorted out the jeans and T-shirts to take home and launder to donate to charity. The baby bottle and stroller are carried in the cab. They will be placed in a travelling exhibit so people who do not believe can see what is happening around them.

I drive home staring at over-fed people lined up outside buffet restaurants, clogged playgrounds at fast food chains, oscillating sprinklers watering ludicrous patches of green grass. I pass pawn shops with racks of pink and blue

bicycles out front, stores with designer electronics, strip malls and baby boutiques. I see new cars and trucks, shiny and glistening on elevated turntables, golf courses and air-conditioned movie theaters.

I enter a cool dark house and hug my dogs and kiss my husband. I stand in a hot shower and use extra shampoo. I pour a big glass of ice-water and sit on a padded chair in the shade of my patio and watch little whiptail lizards chase each other in and around my garden waterfall.

While I have a siesta under a circulating fan, the bodies found in the desert sleep in a big new cooler next to the morgue. The City of Tucson ran out of room three years ago.

Temporal Spaces:

Temporal: Of or pertaining to time as the sphere of human life.

Tempo Rubato, "Stolen Time"

Mary Krane Derr

There is in music no absolute rate of movement. The tempo, as we usually call it, depends on physiological and physical conditions.

-- Ignacy Jan Paderewski, "Tempo Rubato"

Chopin's era scrawled,
on his too-soon death certificate,
tuberculosis,
that is, the Most Fitting End
for Romantic Artistes With Wild Hair.

Our age sought to
excise a sample
for DNA analysis
of his returned-exile heart
from its pillar in Warsaw's
Church of the Holy Cross,
to decree, a
failure of his genes,
cystic fibrosis.

Tuberculosis,
cystic fibrosis,
whatever its given name was,
the clipped bounds
of the diagnostic code

cannot unconceal
in a metronomic instant
what the thing was wholly, its
ever inhaling exhaling
bronchospasming self.

But up down through
the aural fields
that spring back open

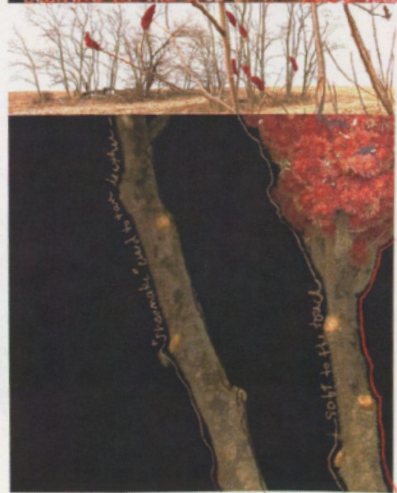
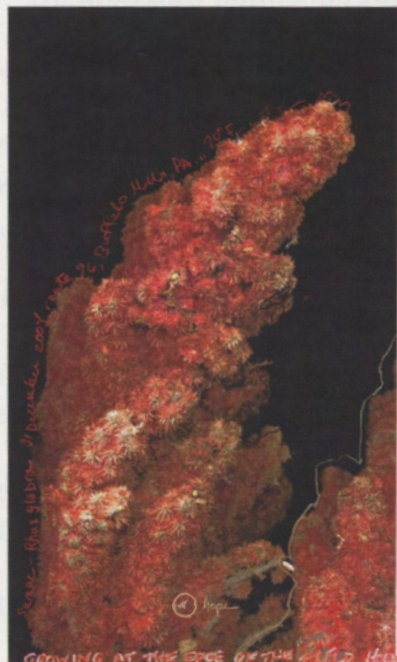
from any Chopin score,
it beats in lush sinuous waves
or clogs and seizes
and drowns in steeply on itself,
just like the lung cilia
of the arrhythmically blessed
and damned:

that "no absolute rate"
of tempo rubato,
as if it were the man's own
staggering grace-polonaise tides
of tortures and mercies of breathing.

A Gravitational Lens (or How My Mother Returned)

Lauren Camp

I stand in a pool of systemic sunshine, watching my mother command her small skiff through molecules of descending heaven. She has never appeared in a green boat before. She rubs wooden oars across the sand: one in, one out. I love her like this. She's beautiful, but faint. I'm surprised that she is an elegant seafarer, but then again, the rabbi remarked on her contradictions and strength at her funeral. Of course, then I wasn't listening. In all these years, she's had time to navigate the engine of death. She tosses a cape over the arch of her back. My mother has dark hair again. She offers a slight smile, which I almost miss. The molten sky floats by, a selfish silken sun settles in my pocket. I watch only the route of my mother. She slicks the boat through dry land, rowing past an irrelevant swell of dust. I've never seen her this forceful. I am enthralled that the desert opens to her. For the first time in a decade, I am calm, waiting out the banner of wind from the west, and looking both ways into the glowing sea of ruffled light, my palms full of broken eyeglasses.



Shoemaker's Secret

Bridget Sullivan

I think I understand a place yet when I arrive and spend time searching for details I am most often surprised by what I learn. The subtle detail of life and death passes and we do not notice the treasures we trample or pass by.

Collective Origins

Colleen Coyne

Start here: bugs' legs candied in sap, an amulet
cast among capillaries of ruined bark—we supplant
them, piece by piece, until the trunk is stripped.

The timbre of certain voices is more than we can bear.
It's what the bones tell us: we hear the old gods sighing.
Rooted in marrow (where the ampersand's embedded),

casual biology lines our cavities—fine rind
which, when peeled away, reveals pith, the edible
inner, cracks in the pulpit. Dark bodies of knowledge

slow our circulation, make us tiny enough to tunnel,
narrowly, between the barrows, visiting our fellow
fossils. This method of fieldwork exhausts our lungs—

tightens organs' casings—and if we shed skin,
it becomes scrim. The harrows will stir it up, fine grind
from the furrows like fine grime on a spring moon,

whose eyes are watching yes watching us, while we rise
with the requiem that plays through puddles (quivering,
then still). Young shoots quicken as out-of-season

snow buries our coordinates, marries our backbones
to saplings. When everything rises, the cumulus has no use
and instead attaches to the ribs. There, something bonds

and ingrains—but something interstitial is bound to break
free: something arises among trees, settling in the periphery,
where black beetles cling to branches like clots in the bloodstream,

detaching when they finally form wings. How have we never real-
ized how thick the trunks can be? The combine's guttural churn
reminds us of an echo's girth—as damp earth turns over—

and, without ever ending, begins again.

In the late 90's, my friend Loretta, along with about a dozen young activists, formed a support group called *Lift With Your Legs*. Loretta had used a wheelchair since the age of four, but her Medicaid allowance was insufficient to pay official care givers. *Lift With Your Legs*, all volunteers, coordinated a schedule of overnight care and periodic assistance for Loretta.

Loretta dyed her dirty blond hair pink at the tips, had a nose piercing, and wore thick silver rings on her fingers. Her wardrobe, with lots of pink and black, might be defined as femme punk — both girly and grunge. Her wheel chair was decorated with queer, feminist, and disability rights stickers and pins: a pink triangle, a women's symbol, and quotes like "Be the Bomb You Throw" and "Lame is Good."

The core of us and Loretta had met through the lesbian, gay, bi, trans group at Virginia Commonwealth University, when most of the group were undergrads and I was working on an MFA. After we graduated, we formed The Richmond Queer Space Project (RQSP), a queer community center which housed the local chapters of Food Not Bombs and Indy Media. We offered arts shows, weekly skills workshops, a guest speaker series and other activist events.

RQSP defined queer as the belief that sex, sexuality and gender are fluid and shifting categories, rather than rigid and fix, and a large part of our mission was to "promote community among queer identified people." But we also tried to see the interconnectivity of oppressed groups and provided "space for queer positive groups who work to challenge heterosexism, sexism, ableism, racism and classism." It was mostly through RQSP, and by becoming friends with Loretta, that I began learning about disability rights, both in theory and in practice.

Loretta had defied her rural upbringing and family's low expectations by going to university, had defied the

university by constantly demanding access to all events and services, and had defied the mainstream gay and lesbian group on campus by becoming their president and later co-founding a more radical student group, Queer Liberation Front, and eventually RQSP. But Loretta also defied those of us in RQSP by challenging and informing our understanding of disability.

The first building RQSP rented was a large downtown warehouse that housed a community space, kitchen, and several resident spaces. But the bedrooms were on the second floor, and there was no elevator, so Loretta designed her room on the first floor, complete with a three-foot-wide, four-foot-tall doorway—just tall enough for her to easily glide in and out in her chair. Those of us who walked had to duck each time we entered her room. In this way, Loretta reminded us how disability is so often based on perception and design—that is, who the culture thinks of when it develops its spaces and systems, its notions of who is able-bodied and who is disabled.

It wasn't long before I recognized some of the less physical obstacles Loretta faced being in a wheelchair. When she and I went to the movies or out to eat, the servers and cashiers often talked only to me and expected I would order and pay for both of us. Even if we went into her bank to do business, the clerks kept asking me what she wanted, instead of talking directly to her. Over time, I learned to cast my eyes down when they talked, to signal to them that I wasn't the one to make eye contact with. Still, when I would glance up, their eyes were often still on me.

Though I knew being disabled was largely about perception, I admit it was hard not to feel that I was more able-bodied than her, especially on nights I stayed over at her place as a caretaker. As I saw it initially, I'd cook dinner, wash the dishes, and feed her cat. As part of going to bed, I'd have to lift her from her wheelchair onto the toilet, hand her her water and toothbrush, change her into her night clothes and lift her into bed, adjusting her body to her precise but

gentle requests: "Can you pull my hip back toward the wall a bit? Now move the pillow between my legs toward my feet. Can you pull my lower arm out a bit towards you and pull up the sheet so I can hold it?" In the morning, it was the similar drill, in reverse: lifting her up, taking her to the bathroom, dressing her and making breakfast.

The rest of the time, however, we just hung out. We'd work on homework or RQSP projects together, gossip about who we had crushes on, or watch a couple episodes of *Buffy*—one of her favorite shows. I often brought over my dog, Gracie, who had a stand-offish relationship with Loretta's cat, Chance, and sometimes it was enough to watch them interact, the small scuffles and the tentative truces they formed.

When Loretta gave presentations to classes or at conferences, she often talked of the idea of the "super cripp," a popular trope in films and stories of the amazing disabled person who overcame great odds and had no faults. She'd tell stories of people who'd tell her how amazing she was, simply because she was going to college, riding the bus, or eating in a public restaurant. Even in this essay, I struggle against that trope, trying to share what I've learned without making Loretta seem to have super-human properties. One thing that helps is recognizing that those of us who don't identify as disabled are really only "temporarily abled," as Loretta liked to put it.

It was fairly easy to realize that as a baby, I was unable to do anything except cry, eat, and poop. And I could easily imagine a time in the future—hopefully far in the future—when I might return to that state. But, at that time, I still thought of myself in that long stretch of life when I was able-bodied. Gradually, even that certainty dissolved.

One morning while staying with Loretta as part of my *Lift With Your Leg's* shift, I learned how tentative that belief was. I'd crossed town on my bike the afternoon before to be with her. Soon after I arrived, I realized I'd forgotten my allergy medicine—I had a pretty strong reaction to Chance.

But I suffered through the runny nose, sneezing and itchy eyes, taking breaks outside to get some clean air. That night, I'd helped Loretta get ready for bed, then I undressed, took off my glasses, and settled into the bed beside her.

When morning came, my allergies came back with a vengeance. I had to run to the bathroom to get tissue. Then, I couldn't find my glasses. I had poor eyesight and could barely find my clothes and put them on. I squinted to see if my shirt was inside out or not and had trouble doing simple tasks like putting the kettle on or making toast. Plus, I was sneezing, scratching my eyes, and blowing my nose. I could barely get Loretta up, unable to see where to get a good footing in the clutter of her bedroom or if I was setting her in the chair properly.

Without my glasses, I was in some way incapacitated. I realized then how arbitrary our idea of ability was, how we think of glasses as perfectly normal—stylish even at times—but never consider a wheelchair that way. I now can think of a hundred ways any of us could become disabled in a moment: if we have no money, if we don't know the language of the country we are in, if we come down with the flu, if we don't know how to drive, etc. The line between abled and disabled was increasingly blurred.

At some point that morning, Loretta helped me locate my glasses, which let me function much better. I slowly began to consider then how I wasn't simply helping her on my shifts, but we were really helping each other. Though I did the more physical acts of cooking, Loretta participated by suggesting menus, helping me find utensils, giving me advice. Even moving her from the chair to the toilet was not simply a task that I did alone: we both had a part, and gradually she taught me to think of the act more like a dance of two bodies together than of me lifting some inanimate object. When she needed to get out of the chair, I started saying "Liquid Loretta!" a way to remind myself that the act of lifting was really something flowing and seamless that was happening between the two of us. Disability and ability grad-

ually seem to me like RQSP's notion of being queer, something fluid rather than fixed.

Loretta also taught me about accepting my body. One day she and a couple other members of Richmond Queer Space Project decided to get tattoos of a pink star, the symbol of RQSP. I had planned to join them, but I showed up at the tattoo parlor late and then I chickened out. I was nearing forty, nearly a decade older than the rest of the group, and didn't feel confident enough to get a tattoo. I stood there admiring the stars on Loretta and the others, and wished I could feel that comfortable and playful with my body.

Though she wasn't in a relationship most of the time I knew her, Loretta was always open about her crushes and seemed content, though disappointed, that she was single. For almost three years, I'd dated a guy who also was a part of RQSP, but in the summer of 2003, we broke up, and I didn't take being single nearly as well as she did.

When I finally got a date in the fall, I was even more of a wreck. The guy I met, Davie, was a dancer I'd seen around town who I'd had a crush on for years. He was also in his early 20's—fifteen years younger than me. Somehow, I still managed to ask him out, and he accepted. But after our first date, I was certain he wouldn't want to see me again. I didn't have a dancer's body and was nearly twice his age. Yet, when he called a couple days later, and I asked if he wanted to have dinner, he accepted.

I had to go to Loretta's that night and told her I was going to have to leave for a few hours to go on a date. She was very excited for me and over dinner I talked endlessly about Davie, about our first date, about our kiss, which had been more than I had even imagined would happen. But I was too embarrassed to tell Loretta of my fears, how I wanted to sleep with Davie, but worried he'd think my body wasn't attractive, how I was intimidated by his seemingly perfect body.

After dinner, I did the dishes and then followed Loretta into the bathroom to help her pee. The process of taking

off her pants was give and take, her leaning forward while I pulled her pants down in back, then her leaning back, while I pulled them in front. As the pants finally slid off, I was surprised by a new tattoo on Loretta's leg—one I'd never seen before, one she'd not talked about. I nearly cry when I read it. In simple lettering, it said, *As Is*.

It seemed the perfect concise way to tell herself—and others—to accept her body just as it was. Knowing Loretta could come to terms with her body like that made me feel that I could do the same with mine.

After she was dressed again, I thanked her, then I dashed off to meet up with Davie. I kept those two tattooed words in my mind as he and I had dinner, went back to his place, lay in his bed and touched. That night, I came to understand that the sexiest bodies belong to those who are comfortable with themselves.

My relationship with Davie was brief, but beautiful. For the most part, I didn't let the doubts about my body get in the way of just being present with him. It's surprising how difficult it is to simply accept my own body, but I owe that ability largely to Loretta.

Split rocks are not uncommon in our northern woods.
Boulders moved by glacier and then halved by frost.
Trails wind through them, thrilling children
who are drawn to such things, cozy places

where the imagination is set free. I can imagine
a stone, a child might make believe, looking up
at the narrow strip of sky or pine, the remains
of the bon-stone world, just as, in the Dark Ages,



Alan with Lung Cancer - worry of the one in three
Eleanor Bennett

...a family of her own one day she opens
as she had seen her mother do, the Bible
opens to any random page, though it is not
random, it is God's guidance--there will be an answer

here--and finds "To whom coming as unto
a living stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God
and precious," chooses the book, listens hard, listens
to the sounds of her own children playing in the yard.

Split Rock

Jean LeBlanc

Split rocks are not uncommon in our northern woods,
boulders moved by glacier and then halved by frost.
Trails wind through them, thrilling children
who are drawn to such things, cozy places

where the imagination is set free. *I am inside
a stone*, a child might make believe, looking up
to see the narrow strip of sky or pine, the remains
of the non-stone world. Just so, in the Dutch colony

of New Amsterdam, where nine-year-old
Susan Hutchinson steals a few minutes
from the busy household, the press of siblings,
the endless prayers of a rebel mother whose beliefs

have brought them here, among strangers.
Into the woods to sit between the halves of
Split Rock, a handful of blueberries picked
along the way, a treat for any child. Except today,

screams from the distance, then silence, then smoke,
and then the hands that pluck her from her
known world, carry her to a new life, and she
survives, but never knows quite why. Grown

and with a family of her own, one day she opens,
as she had seen her mother do, the Bible,
opens to any random page, though it is not
random, it is God's guidance—there will be an answer

here—and finds, "To whom coming as unto
a living stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God
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Escaping Spaces:

Escape: a. intr. To gain one's liberty by flight; to get
free from detention or control, or from an oppres-
sive or irksome condition. Const. from out of.

Split Rock

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screams from the distance, then silence, then smoke, and then the hands that pluck her from her known world, carry her to a new life, and she survives, but never knows quite why. Grown

and with a family of her own, one day she opens, as she had seen her mother do, the Bible, opens to any random page, though it is not random, it is God's guidance—there will be an answer

here—and finds, "To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed of men, but chosen of God and precious," closes the book, listens hard, listens to the sounds of her own children playing in the yard.

Flying with Clipped Wings

Don and Carolyn Quinn

Lorraine's husband was dying, but not fast enough for them to hold out financially. When George was first diagnosed, what was the point of living, and could return to what they had never gotten around to before.

In Italy and France, they absorbed the cultures, the people, and the food. George's spirit lifted at each new discovery, and they lived as if they were still in the world.

Escape: a. intr. To gain one's liberty by flight; to get free from detention or control, or from an oppressive or irksome condition. Const. from, of, out of.

All Parisians must be born creative. They make every meal, conversation, and flirtation an art form. They're even clever at parking where no spots exist.

The trips distracted George, but when he returned home, it all resurfaced: the tests and treatments, the lingering after-effects. Traveling offered his only respite and his craving for it intensified.

George's treatments failed to cure him, so Lorraine gathered information for one last trip, to the National Wildlife Refuge in Midway Atoll. George had been stationed on Midway during WWII, and lately, he'd been reminiscing about the Albatross that inhabited the island.

"Midway never had an indigenous people," he said. "It has Laysan Albatross. Instead, I've always thought their nickname, 'Gooney Birds,' was a misnomer. Lorraine, because they're beautiful and graceful. Survivors, too, the species has weathered plume hunters, World War II, and military occupation of their habitat."

The doctor said George would only live a few months and advised against traveling to Midway. Too far from his medical team.

Nine months later, barely able to speak and confined to a hospital bed, George was still hanging on. Lorraine

Flying with Clipped Wings

Sue Ann Connaughton

Lorraine's husband was dying, but not fast enough for them to hold out financially. When George was first diagnosed, when there was a chance he'd be cured and could return to work, they agreed to spend part of their savings on travel, something they had never gotten around to before.

In Italy and France, they absorbed the cultures, the people, and the food. George's spirits lifted at each new discovery. He adored the Italian people, especially their fashion sense and friendliness. "How stylish the Italians look, all the time, not just for special events. And they're so welcoming to Americans." In Paris, he marveled at the pervasive creativity. "All Parisians must be born creative geniuses. They elevate every meal, conversation, and flirtation to an art form. They're even clever at parking where no spots exist."

The trips distracted George, but when he returned home, it all resurfaced: the tests and treatments, the lethargic after-effects. Traveling offered his only respite and his craving for it intensified.

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The doctor said George would only live a few months and advised against traveling to Midway. "Too far from his medical team."

Nine months later, barely able to speak and confined to a hospital bed, George was still hanging on. Lorraine

camped out in his room from 8 am until 11 pm. Sometimes, she stayed the night, although she hardly slept. Her physical characteristics mimicked George's, now: they both lost appetites, energy, patches of hair, and the padding around their finger bones.

Their savings were gone. Lorraine sold their house and rented a small apartment near the hospital. If she managed to get by until poor George passed on, she could live frugally off the proceeds of his life insurance.

One evening, George attempted a joke. "Let's fly somewhere, Lorraine," he rasped. Lorraine perked up. For the first time since George's hospitalization, Lorraine skipped her next visit. Instead, she spent the day downloading material from the Internet, and scouring the library for anything about Laysan Albatross in the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge. She stayed up all night, organizing notes, photos, and interview transcripts of biologists. Excitement overshadowed her lack of sleep. George would love the tour she had put together.

In the morning, Lorraine burst into George's hospital room and set up her computer on his bed tray. George didn't wake up. "I'm sorry," the doctor said, when he came in for his morning check, but Lorraine ignored him and continued narrating her slide show. "Look, George, how many steps are involved in the courting dance of the Laysan Albatross. They're monogamous, you know."

She worked her computer mouse feverishly with her right hand and squeezed George's bone-curdled fingers with her left. "Did you know that they fly away for three years at a time, George? They always return to their nests, though. Did you know that, George?"

The Dangers of Packing

Valentina Cano

She packed her things
in that lump of a bag.
Her clothes thrown in
like white flags,
her name tucked into a corner,
beside her tired toothbrush.
She folded thoughts that wouldn't fit,
spreading them out,
trying again.
She ended up carrying those
over her shoulder.
Looking up for rain,
her steps were measured like baking ingredients.
With luck, she'd never be back.

camped out in his... Sometimes, she stayed the night, although she barely slept. Her physical characteristics mimicked George's now; they both lost appetites, energy, patches of skin began to peel around their finger bones.

Their savings were running low, and they had to hold their breath and wait for a small apartment in the city. If she managed to get by without a car, she could live frugally off the money she had saved.

One evening, a bright light shined from somewhere, Lorraine looked out the window. For the first time since George's hospitalization, Lorraine skipped her next day's work, downloaded material from the Internet, and wrote the library for anything about Lorraine's father. At the National Archives, she found a photo of a young man, a photo, a photo, a photo. Lorraine's eyes were drawn to the photo of a young man, a photo, a photo. Lorraine's eyes were drawn to the photo of a young man, a photo, a photo.

In the morning, Lorraine burst into George's hospital room and set up her computer on his bed. George didn't wake up. "I'm sorry," the doctor said, when he came in for his morning check, but Lorraine ignored him and continued narrating her life story. "Look, George, how many steps are involved in the courting dance of the Laysan Albatross. They're monogamous, you know."

She watched her computer mouse feverishly with her right hand and squeezed George's hand-curling fingers with her left. "Did you know that they fly away for three years at a time, George? They always return to their nests, though. Did you know that, George?"

That Night, That Laysan Camp

It began with the artichoke green of home, a note that said *available*. An afterthought, an older man fasting the life and breath of morning — then a blizzard of skin, his beard clumping her thighs, she sighed, subverted with exhaustion, during dusk, passion through unstable dignity, the land, and day on its dead-end trees — and where each night, *available*, the first time of her life.



Goyt Valley
Eleanor Bennett

the night end of her pouring out, with the wrong kind of bearing, but never she kept swallowing the succulent, knowing what she rendered could ruin her. At long tables, she sipped her swartest left and its forbidden incandescence, in random beds, she offered an inverted side of reason, pulled her body open for study, and aimed to free herself from tenderness. She wanted to retain the bond of bowls and glasses, but wanting wouldn't leave her. He wanted her in a Volvo, he undid her armpits. It woke her up.

That Unsafe Place

Lauren Camp

It began with the artichoke green of home,
a note that said *available*, an afterthought,
an older man tasting the bite and breath
of morning – then a blizzard of skin,
his beard skimming her thighs; she sighed,
cobwebbed with exhaustion, driving dusted
passion through unstable dignity, the dead-
end day on its dead-end knees – and *please*,
each night evaporate this flimsy line of freedom.
She gathered her daggers, the cloak of desire.
He was always inside her building, building
puzzles, shaping edifice. The jittered fist
of her heart knotted up. It would not
be an easy year. His lickerish last words
lingered though she kept deleting all the
letters, letting them cool, laying them bare.
Why would she subscribe to knobby nights,
notch each torn-up morning, and weep
once per hour when the entire framework
of her life was set? She owned no discipline,
paced in the opposite direction through
pauses and roaring. A person can't move
toward these sorts of worlds without
the blunt end of fear pouring out, without
the wrong kind of bearing, but never mind;
she kept swallowing the succulent,
knowing what she rendered could ruin her.
At long tables, she sipped her scarlet self
and its forbidden meanings; in random beds,
she offered an inverted axis of reason, pulled
her body open for study, and aimed to free
herself from tenderness. She wanted to relax
the bond of bowls and glasses, but wanting
wouldn't leave her. He undid her in a Volvo;
he undid her anyplace. It woke her up,

and for a while she thought she'd walk into
any man, through the unsteady obstruction
of winter, summer, sadness. Into the exegesis
of her own ancient story, but nothing's ever
zero option, and everything's not beautiful,
or safe, or kind, or hopeless.

Journey
Lauren Camp

-Arriving

I have come to Ireland to gather the rivers because I could
not sleep in my bed. Strangers and sorrows, evenings and
autumn.

Days stuck in a finite space where all attention moved repeat-
edly inward, draining me.

Here is the green side of the world. The river Liffey rolls
through my back pocket and the river Shannon drowns in
my shoe.

Sweet the brine, sweet the sky. Sweet even the endless sound
of my father's voice. Sweet the distance from where I live.

Looking down, I see clouds. Cliffs become my marrow,
the ocean, my prophet. I slurp cream soup noon and supper.

-Dublin

The brick city rumbles with commerce and gray water, each
street unsorted into north and south. Crowds move into gaps
and pulse through a rill of fissured language:

words that tickle and stumble, words in brown jackets brown
shoes, words that hurl and kick, pray and dance.

A beaded raindrop lands on another in a long melody.

I want to read the Book of Kells, turn illuminated pages of
pomegranate and orange nectar pollinated with gold streams
of limned words,

but I climb the Trinity stairs
where faint music floats like psalms from a thousand rows
of volumes. The unity of dust and old ink,

almost too much to bear. Books tired, but alert, murmur
endlessly of their matter.

-North to Sligo

We stand at the crust of the water as long letters move from
their reverie to the ragged edge

of Yeats' grave. Sun nibbles through a thick mist and Innis-
free crouches on the shore. I lean in

to Benbulbin's shadow. A celtic cross binds each rime
and arc of wind. The lingering fog rises from an unresolved

sky. Silence swells. Survival is shallow like this.

-A Pint

On a curved street in Carrick-on-Shannon.

On a wood stool near a stranger.

With a pint of muddy beer.

A bowl of roast parsnip soup.

The tide exhaling across the way.

By a silver rail.

By the skirt of the dreary sun.

On the scarf on the scruff of the island.

Everything in this tavern is a chant and a ritual.

We set our conversation on the counter.

Time refuses to continue.

-Lough Derravaragh, County Westmeath

I have become lost in the rustle of trees the grass carpet
the spill of shadows sheep-stained on dormant hills.

I listen to the courtly skies and my father's epic distractions.
The island opens in a bouquet of rain, and bees turn into
warriors.

A soft day, the vestige of harvest. The land is a green glissan-
do. Wind soldiers on, and the sky shakes.

-Warning

Don't walk into a fairy circle.

If you move through fields of Sitka spruce, through bogs, into
an island of oak, ash, hazel and holly,
beware the sweet gospel
of their voices, the stream and giggle of movement.

You won't need a compass to see the signs.
Beware the tiny girl-bodies as they strut,
their doll eyes dancing. Their spirits reside in the heather, in
tiny specks of yellow gorse
in the weak, wet, westernmost world.

If you are tangled in yourself, carry cold iron
and cast your bells on the night wind,
or the changelings will capture you,
flicker and pirouette on your sadness, pinch and pull until
you are sediment in the forest.

-Most Days Only Slubs of Light

A tatted fog drapes the view, the sky nearly erased,
drifting away in gray-green drops. I traveled to forget

and found ordinary days, barefoot and hopeful
as the ones I left behind. Our car rolls through towns with
ruddy names, a confluence of rivers and vowels.

Amber trunks grow slow and straight with verdant tops. Au-
tumn loops in eighteen strains of green.

I am learning to scavenge the inner corners, fetch beer and
biscuits, see pink in green seas

under pinpoints of light under the chorus of clouds. A long
curve of calm consoles me. What I feared once

has drizzled from my hands. Soon I will return
to scabbed cedars and spiny hop sage, to the tremble

and sigh of stars in the desert,
the bright skin of mornings brewing.



B&W
Eleanor Bennett

Old Faithful

David Iasevoli

On Jane Street an exhaust streams hot air.
The mutt shuns this patch of sidewalk where
a laundry room vents familiar gas
into the day. We pass a man I've seen around—
he stands before the escaping steam
this morning: a bent knee as he cranes
a battered sneaker foot against the vent.
The other hand clutches a coffee cup
and box of Marlboro Lights. What's in the cart?

Books? Last week he stood before the beat
bookstore reading Pound, and on Sunday night
he slept beneath the restaurant trash
of Marionetta, a paperback
of Melville splayed open on his bag.
Fucking cold this morning. The dog slinks past
on her way to sniff a pit bull's balls.
We quicken our trot towards the River
as our dear Reader lowers his sneaker.

Huddled into his hood now, he ponders
Carlos Williams' old woman, old
bag who gives herself up to fruit.
He submits his life to steam, the vapor
that smells of fabric softener.
He deeply felt the cold this dawn, still wet
from last night's pissing rain when he passed
out on a belly full of Gordon's
Gin and pizza crusts. He lights a smoke

and breathes in Bounce and Tide.

Army Specialist Donna Menesini

David Sullivan

To the east, beyond
graffitied Abu Ghraib walls
sways a stand of palms.

Every morning flocks
of blackbirds explode from them,
darkening the sky.

Behind, the sun flinches,
stutters back into focus,
continues to rise.

All day they travel,
nights they fluster to their roosts
while I go nowhere.

Their raucous greetings
echo off these shouting walls—
aggrieved villagers.

Artist Bios

Grace Andreacchi is an American-born novelist, poet and playwright. Works include the novels *Scarabocchio* and *Poetry and Fear*, *Music for Glass Orchestra* (Serpent's Tail), *Give My Heart Ease* (New American Writing Award) and the chapter book *Berlin Elegies*. Her work appears in *Horizon Review*, *The Literateur*, *Cabinet des Fées* and many other fine places. Grace is also managing editor at *Andromache Books* and writes the literary blog *AMAZING GRACE*. She lives in London.

James Bailey holds a MFA from The University of Wisconsin-Madison and is currently an artist and Professor in the School of Art at The University of Montana. James continues his research into both traditional and experimental approaches in printmaking. As an artist, James has exhibited his work nationally and internationally in over 200 exhibitions and national print portfolios throughout the United States and abroad. His work can be found in numerous public and private collections including those of the Walker Art Center, New York Public Library, Jundt Art Museum, Boise Art Museum, Mesa Arts Center, Hillard University Art Museum and Sioux City Arts Center among others. James has presented lectures and workshops through such venues as Frogman's press, Split Rock Arts Program, Blanden Art Museum, Holter Art Museum, PABA Center, along with being a visiting artist at numerous institutions in addition to establishing Matrix Press at The University of Montana.

Eleanor Bennett is a 16 year old internationally award winning photographer and artist who has won first places with National Geographic, The World Photography Organisation, Nature's Best Photography, Papworth Trust, Mencap, The Woodland Trust and Postal Heritage. Her photography has been published in the *Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, BBC News Website and on the cover of books and magazines in the United States and Canada. Her art is globally exhibited, having shown work in London, Paris, Indonesia, Los Angeles, Florida, Washington, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Canada, Spain, Germany, Japan, Australia and The Environmental Photographer of the year Exhibition (2011) amongst many other locations. She was also the only person from the UK to have her work displayed in the National Geographic and Airbus run See The Bigger Picture global exhibition tour with the United Nations International Year Of Biodiversity 2010.

Lauren Camp lives in a farming village in New Mexico. Her first poetry collection, *This Business of Wisdom*, was published by West End Press. She is the editor of *Which Silk Shirt*, a blog about poetry, (www.lauren-camp.com/whichsilksshirt) and *Notes To Cecil*, an evolving installation of

spontaneous poetry and composed photographs on Tumblr. Co-Winner of The Anna Davidson Rosenberg Poetry Awards 2012, her poems have appeared in *J Journal*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and *Caesura*. She has also guest edited special sections for *World Literature Today* (on jazz poetry) and for *Malpais Review* (on the poetry of Iraq). On Sundays, she hosts "Audio Saucepan," a global music/poetry program on Santa Fe Public Radio.

Valentina Cano is a student of classical singing who spends whatever free time she has either reading or writing. She also watches over a veritable army of pets, including her six, very spoiled, snakes. You can find her at <http://carabosseslibrary.blogspot.com>

Jennifer Clark lives in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Her first book of poems, *Necessary Clearings*, will be published by Shabda Press in 2014. *Solo Novo*, *Pear Noir*, *Raven Chronicles*, *Main Street Rag*, *Structo* (U.K.), and *failbetter* are a few of the places that have made a home for her work.

Sue Ann Connaughton is a former research librarian, who writes from Salem, Massachusetts. Her short fiction and poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in a variety of print and online journals, including *Fabula Argentea*; *The Journal of Compressed Creative Arts*; *Barnwood Poetry Magazine*; *The Linnet's Wings*; *The Meadowland Review*; *Twenty20 Journal*; *Boston Literary Magazine*; and *The Binnacle* Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth International Ultra-Short Competition anthologies. Currently, she is writing her first novel.

Colleen Coyne lives in Massachusetts, where she teaches writing and works as a freelance editor. She received her MFA from the University of Minnesota. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Cream City Review*, *Handsome*, *alice blue*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *Drunken Boat*, and elsewhere.

M. Christine Delea is from Long Island and now lives in Oregon. Her latest book, a chapter book, *Did I Mention There's Gambling and Body Parts?*, was published this year by dancing girl girl. Other recent and upcoming publications include *I-70 Review*, *The Mayo Review*, *Sliver of Stone* print edition, and *dirtcakes*. Besides poetry, Delea is also a mixed media artist, quilter, and beader, and will soon be opening a shop on Etsy.

Mary Krane Derr is a poet from Chicago's South Side. She read her work at the 2011 Kritya International Poetry Festival in India. Her poetry (<http://marykranederr.wordpress.com>) has been translated into Hindi; featured on public transit; nominated for Best American Poetry, Best

Spiritual Writing, and the Best of the Net Award; and published in journals like *Seeding the Snow* and *Wordgathering*, anthologies such as *Hunger Enough: Living Spiritually in a Consumer Society* (Pudding House), and websites like that of Poets for Living Waters. She generally prefers not to make any artist's statement beyond "Let the work say it; that's the best way I know how to say it." Beyond that, she tends to become dumbstruck. She can, however, note that "Tempo Rubato" is grounded in her own experiences as a musician, a Polish American, and a person who lives with respiratory disability.

Cliff Henderson lives and works in upstate New York.

H. Edgar Hix is an Oklahoman cum Minnesotan who has been writing poetry since first grade and publishing since high school, some 40+ years ago. He lives with his wife and menagerie in a small white house in a quiet neighborhood of Minneapolis. Besides poetry, his passions include Evangelical theology, sexual egalitarianism, games, visual arts, collecting a variety of items and reading the occasional vampire or werewolf story.

Lynn Hoffman- I am the author of the *Short Course in Beer* and the erotic novel *Philadelphia Personal*. In the middle of writing them, I was diagnosed with cancer, stage four. I was very sick and now I'm not. The most real thing about it now is that heightened sense of every single minute being of great importance. As I got better, both of those books and a chapter book of poetry got published but what really matters to me is the time I spent with my dog in the woods this morning.

David Iasevoli, Ed.D., grew up in Brooklyn and now lives and teaches in the Adirondack Mountains of Upstate New York. He studied at Amherst College with Guru Bob Thurman and received his doctorate from Columbia University. He has traveled through 49 States and loves the deserts of the Southwest, especially White Sands and Death Valley. He has published both poetry and non-fiction, and recently studied at the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference.

Kawika Guillermo is currently finishing his doctorate in Seattle, where he also teaches literature and writes fiction. His work has appeared in over a dozen journals, including *Smokelong Quarterly*, *Annalemma*, *The Monarch Review* and *Mobius: Journal of Social Change*.
www.kawikaguillermo.com/

Molly Sutton Kiefer's chapter book *The Recent History of Middle Sand Lake* won the 2010 Astounding Beauty Ruffian Press Poetry Award. Her work has appeared in *Harpur Palate*, *Southampton Review*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *Berkeley Poetry Review*, *Comstock Review*, you

are here, *Gulf Stream*, *Cold Mountain Review*, *Wicked Alice*, and *Permafrost*, among others. She received her MFA from the University of Minnesota, serves as poetry editor to *Midway Journal*, and runs *Balancing the Tide: Motherhood and the Arts | An Interview Project*. She currently lives in Red Wing with her husband and daughter and is expecting a second child in February. She is at work on a manuscript on (in)fertility. More can be found at mollysuttonkiefer.com

Jean LeBlanc is a poet and teacher in Newton, New Jersey. Her work has been published in numerous journals, as well as in collections including *At Any Moment* (Backwaters Press, 2010). She is also proud to be the executive editor of the Paulinskill Poetry Project, a small press that believes all poetry is local. More of her work can be seen at www.jeanleblancpoetry.com.

Adrienne Lobl is a Minnesota native who received her BFA in Visual Communications from the University of Arizona. She is currently living in Minneapolis and working as an artist, illustrator, and graphic designer.

Nathan Alling Long has work in over forty literary journals, including *Tin House*, *Glimmer Train*, *Story Quarterly*, *The Sun*, and *Indiana Review*. His work has also appeared on NPR and in a half dozen anthologies, including the recently published *Stripped*. He lives in the Germantown, teaches creative writing at Richard Stockton College, and can be found at <http://wp.stockton.edu/longn/>.

Linda Lyons graduated summa cum laude from Pima College in May of 2010 and the University of Arizona in May of 2012. During this period, she published numerous short fiction, non-fiction and memoir pieces in literary journals, e-zines, and print publications. She returned to Canada in June 2012 and is now working on several fiction projects and a comprehensive, non-fiction manuscript based on original, unpublished letters from the trenches of WW I. Every day she misses the beauty and power of the Sonoran Desert and the University of Arizona community of students and faculty.

Eleanor Paynter has roots in Texas, Rome, and New York. Her work can be found in *American Literary Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Nimrod*, *Southloop Review*, and in the chapter book *Dismantling the Hive* (Toadlily 2012). She lives in the Netherlands, where she has become fascinated by the history of water manipulation and land creation.

David Porter is a graduate of Rutgers University and San Francisco State University. He was a co-founder and the managing editor of 20

Pounds of Headlights, a literary annual, and he has been the Editor at Large for Caught in the Carousel, a monthly online music magazine (www.caughtinthecarousel.com), since 2007. He has published comic strips (under his alias, Stickboy), fiction and poetry in Cadences, Ghost Ocean, Hotel Amerika, Ink, Olios, Open Wide Magazine, The Santa Clara Review and Sojourn. Porter lives in Nicosia, Cyprus, where he is working on his first collection of short stories, Protracted Adolescence.

Francine Rubin is the author of the chapter book Geometries (Finishing Line Press). Her poems have also appeared in Anomalous Press, Fuselit, Fringe Magazine, Ozone Park Journal, and Rougarou, among others. She works as the Associate Director of the Learning Center at SUNY Purchase College, where she also teaches writing. Visit her online at francinerubin.tumblr.com.

Steve Shilling loves maps and thinks that every classroom should have one decent one of the United States and the World. He has been published in numerous journals, including: DASH Journal, Reed Magazine, Crannóg, and Red Wheelbarrow. A proud alumnus of Hope College in Holland, Michigan, he has been able to pass along his love for reading and writing poetry while teaching high school English for the last fifteen years. When not teaching or writing, he enjoys coaching high school football and bicycle riding. Shilling lives in McMurray, Pennsylvania with his wife Megan, two children, Stephen and Courtney, and cat Sammy.

Emily Strauss is a retired college English and ESL teacher, who has written poetry her whole life, though she is self-taught. Mostly from California, with time spent working overseas, she focuses on the natural landscapes of the American West, often the deserts. She travels and camps alone, and uses these solitary trips to notice and record what she observes as a backdrop to tell about the human life that we impose on the land. She has had over 60 poems appear in public on the internet and in anthologies over the past decade, including recently in Poetry Unlocked, Bijou Poetry Review, Earthborne Magazine, Forge Journal, and Red Sky.

Bridget Sullivan received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 1987 and her MFA from Towson University in 1996. She has participated in group and solo exhibitions since 1986 and has most recently exhibited at School 33 Art Center, Load of Fun Gallery, and Jordan Faye Contemporary all in Baltimore, Maryland; Greenbelt Art Center, Greenbelt, Maryland; and the WomanKraft Gallery, Tucson, Arizona. Sullivan was awarded a Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist's Grants in 2004 in Photography and in 2002 in the New Genre category. Her work has been featured in AfterImage: Inklight, and URHere Journal

of Creative Geography. She currently resides in Baltimore, MD with her husband Richard and two daughters Maggie and Grace.

David Sullivan's first book, Strong-Armed Angels, was published by Hummingbird Press, and two of its poems were read by Garrison Keillor on The Writer's Almanac. Every Seed of the Pomegranate, a multi-voiced manuscript about the war in Iraq, was published by Telbot Bach. He teaches at Cabrillo College, where he edits the Porter Gulch Review with his students, and lives in Santa Cruz with his love, the historian Cherie Barkey, and their two children, Jules and Mina Barivan. <http://davidallensullivan.weebly.com/index.html>

Jesse Wallis' poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in CutBank, Poet Lore, Poetry East, The Southern Review, Southwestern American Literature and Tampa Review. He studied art at Syracuse University and the California Institute of the Arts and writing and film at the University of Iowa. After living in Japan for nine years, he returned to his hometown of Phoenix, where he currently works in human resources for a public school district.

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